

POLICY FOR DATA REQUESTS OF NMFS OBSERVER-OBTAINED INFORMATION

- 1) The only individuals who may request and receive data include: the owner(s), or the captain acting as an authorized representative for the owner(s), or a vessel participating in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Observer Program. No other individuals may be issued any data under this policy.
- 2) Any data request must be submitted in writing on a form letter which may be obtained from a NMFS Observer, or the address below. Two signatures are required on this letter: that of the individual requesting the data, and that of the individual releasing the data. All letters must then be returned to the following address:

Chief, Fisheries Sampling Branch
National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1097

Any questions or other requests relating to data release should also be directed to the above address.

- 3) It should be understood that upon release of the requested data, the recipient then becomes responsible for it.
- 4) The individual signing the letter as the “releaser” must issue the information in compliance with this policy.
- 5) Data may not be released upon an oral request, or without first completing and signing the authorized release letter mentioned above.
- 6) Field diaries do not meet the specifications of releasable data under the policy. No field diaries may be copied for, or reviewed by, vessel owners or captains.
- 7) Release of data for trips in which more than 1 vessel participated (i.e. pair trawl trips) may only occur if both vessel owners or captains complete and sign data release letters.
- 8) Any requests for historical data (i.e. data that an observer has already mailed in) should be forwarded to the address above.
- 9) All letters should be completed in pen, not pencil.